



JOHN MASKELL

... out for a month.

MASKELL BREAKS SHOULDER

WYCOMBE WANDERERS' goalkeeper John Maskell will be out of football for up to a month after breaking his shoulder-blade in Saturday's 2-0 defeat at the hands of Tooting and Mitcham. Maskell's injury was one of the many black spots of a Wycombe performance that was one of the worst this season.

The injury occurred after only two minutes of the second half when the goalkeeper was slow off his line to field a Tooting throw-in. He saved the resulting cross from Alan Ives but was injured in doing so. After treatment from Jock Shepherd, John was able to continue, but in considerable pain.

It was not until the 60th minute — 13 minutes later — that he was eventually replaced by substitute Gerry Olson, normally a centre half, John walking off painfully clutching his shoulder.

John Delaney made a welcome return to the side after missing two matches and was soon showing some of his old power that has been lacking for much of the season.

Wycombe's problem seemed to spread from midfield on Saturday. Both Johnny Hutchinson and Alan Gane had games to forget, especially 'Hutch,' who was out of touch for nearly the whole 90 minutes.

Larry Pritchard was unable to overcome Hutchinson's lack of support and for much of the time, Tooting were bustling and fighting to win a wealth of possession. Yet again, Wycombe's poor passing — something the crowd have been most unused to in the last few years — reached an all time low for the season.

Wycombe W. 0, Tooting & M. 2

Report by STUART EARP

But also on Saturday, Wycombe can justly claim their luck was right out. When things were going wrong, luck can often play the all important part. Yet again, it seemed the Blues came up against a goalkeeper who appeared to have saved his best form purely for this match!

Twice Dave Cobb, formerly with Walton, produced thrilling saves from beautifully hit shots that would have been goals on most other occasions.

Wycombe started brightly with Cobb rushing out at the feet of Keith Searle after two minutes and then again from Holifield two minutes later. Tooting looked decidedly shaky at the back for the first 15 minutes with Searle laying off opportunities for Tony Amos and Holifield.

The Blues' pressure however was not sustained and Tooting were allowed to settle. Alan Berrecloth and Doug Francis began to get a grip of midfield despite the efforts of Pritchard.

After Francis had gone close with a snap shot after 26 min-

utes, Tooting took the lead on the half hour. A free kick from the bearded Adrian Hill sailed into the Wycombe area. Ian Rundle was outjumped by Tony Coppin who nodded the ball on for Alan Ives to prod home.

Juneman wasted no time in pressing home the advantage but his shot hit the side netting after a neat piece of inter-passing with Francis.

Wanderers at last came to life after 35 minutes when Tony Amos made ground and sent in a left-foot drive which Cobb tipped over. From the resulting corner Alan Gane blazed the ball wide. Gane had several other cracks at goal but they all met with a similar fate.

Wycombe became more and more ragged and as the half wore on, they became individualistic. Holifield and Amos both set off on runs into the Tooting half but often, they pushed the ball too far in front of them and Tooting were able to boot the ball clear.

The Blues' problems were emphasised in the 40th minute

when John Maskell came out of his penalty area as Ives challenged Rundle to a through ball. Two yards outside the line, the 'keeper handled the ball and gave away a free kick.

Maskell suffered his injury soon in to the second half but Wycombe hit back immediately when Pritchard, put away by Searle, had a goalbound shot palmed out by Cobb. In the 52nd minute Hutchinson made one of his few contributions to the game when he crashed home in a terrific shot, only to see the 'keeper leap again to turn the ball away.

As Tooting struggled to recapture their first half form, Wycombe attacked again but found Cobb invincible. A full blooded thunderbolt by Holifield looked like ripping the net but somehow Cobb flung himself in its path to divert it over the top.

Gerry Olson took over from Maskell on the hour and soon won the cheers of the crowd by fisting out Ives' corner. The setback of losing their goalkeeper seemed to have injected some much needed urgency into Wycombe's game. Unfortunately it didn't last for long.

A sweeping move involving Searle, Pritchard and Amos saw the latter bring the ball down, turn and shoot powerfully but Cobb was able to gather at the second attempt.

In between the Wycombe raids however, Tooting themselves were beginning to look increasingly dangerous. Ives went close when put through by Juneman and Tooting sealed the match with their second goal after 82 minutes.

Hill's free kick was met by Bobby Green and flicked on to Ives. A neat turn saw the winger clip his shot past Olson. The goal prompted the early departure of many Wycombe supporters, who continued to file out of the ground all too regularly.

But there was little to keep them on the terraces. Alan Gane hit another long range effort well wide and Tooting never looked like surrendering their lead in the closing minutes.

WYCOMBE: J. Maskell (sub. G. Olson, 60 mins.), M. Cooper, D. Gamblin, I. Rundle, J. Delaney, A. Gane, M. Holifield, L. Pritchard, K. Searle, A. Amos, J. Hutchinson.

TOOTING: D. Cobb, W. Smith, K. Sheehan, A. Hill, R. Green, J. Wareing, A. Berrecloth, D. Francis, D. Juneman, A. Coppin, A. Ives, sub T. Ford (not used).

Referee: C. A. Gregory (Watford).

Half-time: 0-1. **Goalscorers:** (Tooting) — Ives 2 (30, 82).

Attendance: 1,177.

